

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1450
By Hargrove

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Gary Sasser and Averitt Express, Inc. on their meritorious service to the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, one of the vital underpinnings of the economy of our State and nation is the entrepreneurial spirit demonstrated by those of our citizenry who take the required risks to establish their own businesses through the application of their intellect, resources, and determination; these courageous risk-takers infuse vitality into our economy and provide jobs which contribute to our shared prosperity; and

WHEREAS, one such outstanding Tennessee entrepreneur is Gary Sasser, President and Chief Executive Officer of Averitt Express, Inc., one of the nation's leading freight transportation and supply chain management providers; and

WHEREAS, Averitt Express, Inc. was originally established in 1958 by Thurman Averitt as Livingston Merchant's Co-op, a small trucking company that hauled dry goods between Nashville and Livingston, Tennessee. The business was incorporated in 1969 as Averitt Express; and

WHEREAS, while making regular deliveries in Nashville, Mr. Averitt became acquainted with a young dockworker who helped him unload his trailer by the name of Gary Sasser. In October of 1971, Gary Sasser purchased Averitt Express from Thurman Averitt, which at the time consisted of two associates, three tractors, and five trailers. Since his purchase of Averitt Express, the company has grown into one of the nation's leading providers of freight transportation and supply chain management, consisting of more than 6,000 associates, 3,000 tractors, and 10,000 trailers; and

WHEREAS, a former member of the United States Marines Corps reserves, Gary Sasser attended the University of Tennessee while working part-time in the transportation business. He is a highly respected businessman who shares his considerable time and talents as a member of the boards of several local, state, and national charitable organizations; and

WHEREAS, since 1971, Gary Sasser has overseen the steady growth and expansion of Averitt Express as the president of the company. In 1981, concurrent with deregulation, Averitt expanded beyond Tennessee to Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, in 1991, Averitt Express launched one-way truckload service within the Southeast, to Canada, and to the Midwest, in addition to adding lanes in Indiana, Illinois, Ohio and Michigan; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, Averitt Supply Chain Solutions was initiated to offer customized logistics services and managed warehouse facilities to help businesses develop diversified, flexible, efficient, and well-managed supply chain solutions; and

WHEREAS, 1997 and 1998 saw the addition of Averitt Dedicated, a fleet and fleet management service sharing Averitt's cost and operations efficiencies with companies outsourcing fleets, and Averitt Time Critical, a service using an expanded infrastructure to include ground and air fleets; and

WHEREAS, going global in 2000, Averitt Express established Averitt International, which offers portside warehouse facilities to provide expertise in import/export services in conjunction with domestic line haul and the brokerage of ocean and airfreight services for Asia and Europe; and

WHEREAS, in 2004, to expand its international strengths, Averitt added a US Customs-bonded facility in Memphis, Tennessee. The company is now approved to take direct receipt of imported goods, hold them for customs clearance, and, upon clearance, immediately move the goods to their final destination via LTL and TL services; and

WHEREAS, with a company vision of "To Be the Best..The Carrier of Choice," Gary Sasser and Averitt Express are focused on providing quality service to their customers by taking

personal responsibility, working as a team, recognizing excellent performance, and believing in continuous improvement; and

WHEREAS, joining Mr. Sasser on the remarkable executive team of Averitt Express, Inc. are Mr. Wayne Spain, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer; Mr. Phil Pierce, Executive Vice President, Sales and Marketing; and Mr. George Johnson, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Averitt Express has received numerous honors and special recognitions over the years, including publication service awards from *Global Logistics and Supply Chain Strategies*, *Inbound Logistics*, and *Logistics Management* and customer service awards from such outstanding companies as Jostens, Inc., Manchester Tank, Glaxosmithkline, R.J. Reynolds, Jack Daniels, Dupont, Hytrol Conveyor, Eastman Chemical Company, Saturn Corporation, General Motors, GTE Supply, and Philips Electronics; and

WHEREAS, a company that believes in corporate responsibility, Averitt Express is a proud participant in the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Smartway program, pursuing the reduction of greenhouse gases and air pollution and promoting cleaner, more efficient ground freight transportation; and

WHEREAS, the associates of Averitt Express are active in supporting charitable organizations through Averitt Cares, one of the first associate-supported charities of its kind. Averitt Cares is completely funded by the voluntary contributions of the associates and, since 1986, has donated more than \$3 million to charities, including \$125,000 to both the American Heart Association and St. Jude Children's Hospital in 2003; and

WHEREAS, Averitt Express, Inc. also supports a number of charitable organizations, such as Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts of America, American Cancer Society, Arthritis Foundation, American Lung Association, Humane Society, March of Dimes, Muscular Dystrophy Association, National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Prevent Blindness Tennessee, YMCA, Second Harvest Food Bank, Ronald McDonald House, Special Olympics, United Way, United Cerebral Palsy, Vanderbilt Children's Hospital, and many others; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to pause in its deliberations to acknowledge and applaud Averitt Express, Inc. for its commitment to quality service and Mr. Gary Sasser for his energy, innovation, and commitment to professional excellence; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Mr. Gary Sasser and Averitt Express, Inc. for meritorious service to the State of Tennessee, and extend our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.